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Message Text

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51
ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEA-11 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 SAM-01 EB-11 IO-14 ACDA-19 SAJ-01

OMB-01 DRC-01 /157 W
---------- 101914
R 080930Z FEB 74
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4734
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
COMIDEASTFOR

UNCLAS DAR ES SALAAM 0395

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, UK, TZ, US, XO

SUBJECT: BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY SPEAKS OUT ON INDIAN OCEAN

REF: DAR ES SALAAM 374 (NOTAL)

PASS USIA

1. UK SEC. OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS, SIR ALEC DOUGLAS-HOME, HELD NEWS CONF. IN DAR ES SALAAM FEBRUARY 5. HIS COMMENTS INCLUDED PARTICULARLY HARD-HITTING RESPONSE, QUOTED IN FULL BELOW, ON MAJOR POWER NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN.

QUESTION: NEWSMAN, REFERRING TO US SHIP BUILDUP IN INDIAN OCEAN (10), ASKED FOR OFFICIAL UK POLICY ON IO.
ANSWER: QUOTE FUNNY THING THAT ALWAYS STRIKES ME IS AN AWFUL LOT OF TALK ABOUT THE AMERICANS IN THE IO AND NONE ABOUT THE RUSSIANS. THIS IS A VERY CURIOUS FACT OF LIFE THAT YOU NEVER HEAR PEOPLE TALK ABOUT THE RUSSIAN FLEET WHICH IS THERE AND IT IS UNCLASSIFIED

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A POWERFUL FLEET. IT'S A FLEET SO FAR OF 25 VESSELS ORGANIZED TO

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REFUEL AT SEA AND IT IS, THEREFORE, QUITE A FORMIDABLE THING. NOBODY MENTIONED IT. AND WHEN THE AMERICANS PUT A SHIP OR TWO INTO THE IO, EVERYBODY SQUEALS. WELL, I WOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS AN INTEREST OF ANY COUNTRY IN AFRICA OR INDEED ANY COUNTRY IN ASIA TO SEE THE IO A MONOPOLY OF THE SOVIET NAVY. AND THAT IS WHAT IT IS AT PRESENT. AND SO IF YOU ARE NON-ALIGNED, AT LEAST YOU SHOULD BE BALANCED UNQUOTE.

QUESTION: NEWSMAN COMMENTED THAT TWO WRONGS DO NOT MAKE A RIGHT. WHY THEN DO YOU BRING SHIPS HERE? JUST BECAUSE THE RUSSIANS BRING THEM?

ANSWER: QUOTE BUT YOU SEE THERE ARE VERY IMPORTANT TRADE ROUTES. THE OIL COMES FROM THE GULF AROUND THE CAPE OF AFRICA TO WESTERN EUROPE. NOW IF THE RUSSIANS HAVE A MONOPOLY OF THE IO, THEY COULD MAKE TROUBLE. I DON'T SAY THEY WOULD, BUT THEY COULD. AND WE, THEREFORE, MUST BE IN A POSITION TO SAFEGUARD OUR TRADE ROUTES. IT IS REASONABLE, THEREFORE, THAT WE SHOULD HAVE REPRE-SENTATION THERE. WE DON'T WANT TO CHALLENGE THE RUSSAISN. WE DON'T WANT TO EVEN EQUAL THE RUSSAIN PRESENCE. BUT DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE THE RUSSIAN PRESENCE THERE IS THERE. THAT WOULD BE VERY FOOLISH TO ALLOW THEM TO HAVE A MONOPOLY OF ANY PARTICULAR OCEAN IT WOULD NOT BE IN THE INTEREST, I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT, OF ANYBODY IN THE FREE WORLD, UNQUOTE.

2. NON OF DOUGLAS-HOME'S COMMENTS CONCERNING IO RPT IO HAVE BEEN CARRIED IN THE TANZANIAN PRESS. INTERESTINGLY, HOWEVER, EDITORIAL IN FEBRUARY 6 ISSUE OF UHURU, SWAHILI-DAILY OWNED BY TANU, TOOK SWIPE AT SOVIETS AS WELL AS US AND UK. EDITORIAL STATED:
" US AND UK ARE CLAIMING THAT THEY HAVE TAKEN THIS STEP (EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA) BECUASE THEY DISCOVERED THAT USSR HAS INCREASED ITS MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN THE OCEAN. WHAT WE WANT FROM THESE COUNTRIES WHICH ARE SO INVOLVED IS TO ADHERE TO THE UN DECLARATIONS AND RECOGNIZE THAT THEIR BIG POWER COMPETION IS ENDANGERING WORLD PEACE. UNQUOTE.
THIS IS FIRST TIME IN EMBASSY RECOLLECTION THAT SEMI-OFFICIAL MEDIA HAS LUMPED USSR IN CRITICISM OF IO NAVAL ACTIVITY. ALTHOUGH UHURU EDITORIAL MAY BE UNRELATED TO DOUGLAS-HOME COMMENTS. JUXTAPOSITION OF EDITORIAL DAY AFTER NEWS CONFERENCE IS UNUSALLY COINCIDENTAL.
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